

REMARKS

Claims 2-4 and 7-20 are now pending in the application. In this amendment, claims 1, 5 and 6 are cancelled, claims 2, 7-9 and 15-19 are amended, and new claim 20 is added. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the rejections in view of the amendments and remarks contained herein.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 1-19 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention. This rejection is respectfully traversed. As the Examiner correctly surmised, the claimed “function provision module” means “an application”. Applicant takes the Examiner’s interpretation as conclusive evidence that the claimed “function provision module” is definite and therefore elects not to amend the claims.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-19 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hofrichter (PCT/US01/45355). This rejection is respectfully traversed. Notwithstanding and solely in the interest of expediting prosecution, Applicant cancels claims 1, 5 and 6 and amends independent claims 2, 15, 16, 17, 18 and 19.

Amended independent claim 2 now calls for the subject matter of previously pending claim 5. More particularly, independent claim 2 calls for a device management system which connects a network device with a device management terminal that

manages the network device so that they can communicate with each other. Among other features, the claimed device management terminal includes a function selecting section that allows a user to select one or more of the functions corresponding to the function provision module determined by the function determining section. Further, the module reading section reads out a function provision module that corresponds to a function selected by the function selecting section from the module storing section.

In claim 15, a device management terminal is connected to a network device so that it can communicate with the network device. Among other elements, the device management terminal comprises a function selecting section that allows a user to select one or more of the functions corresponding to the function provision module determined by the function determining section. Further, the module reading section reads out a function provision module that corresponds to a function selected by the function selecting section from the module storing section.

In claim 16, a network device is connected to a device management terminal so that they can communicate with each other. Among other elements, the network device comprises a function selecting section that allows a user to select one or more of the functions corresponding to the function provision module.

In claim 17, a programmable computer is connected to a network device so that they can communicate with each other. Among other elements, the programmable computer comprises a function selecting section that allows a user to select one or more of the functions corresponding to the function provision module determined by the function determining section. Further, the module reading section reads out a function

provision module that corresponds to a function selected by the function selecting section.

In claim 18, a programmable computer is connected to a network device so that they can communicate with each other. Among other elements, the programmable computer comprises a function selecting section that allows a user to select one or more of the functions corresponding to the function provision module.

In claim 19, a device management method is provided for connecting a network device so that it can communicate and managing the network device. According to the claimed method, when device information regarding the network device is received, functions available to the network device are determined based on the device information, and based on the determination, a function provision module that is applied to the network device to provide it with a function is sent to the network device, and a function selecting section is provided that allows a user to select one or more of the functions corresponding to the function provision module.

In contrast to the foregoing, Hofrichter merely teaches a GUI that allows a user to select an application but fails to teach the claimed two-stage technique, which comprises a function determining section for determining a function provision module that has a function available to the network device based on the device information received by the device information receiving section and a function selecting section that allows a user to select one or more of the functions corresponding to the function provision module determined by the function determining section.

Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that the claimed invention has an upper configuration that Hofrichter fails to teach. The claimed configuration allows one to

change functions of a network device without requiring technical knowledge and can reduce the time and effort required for function change and is also suitable for shortening delivery times.

Inasmuch as Hofrichter fails to teach this aspect of the claimed invention and this aspect would not be obvious to the skilled practitioner, Hofrichter cannot render the above independent claims obvious.

Claims 3 and 4 depend from claim 1 and should be in condition for allowance for at least the same reasons as set forth above.

Claims 7-14 are amended to depend from new claim 20 described below. Accordingly, this rejection is moot.

NEW CLAIM

New claim 20 is added. Claim 20 corresponds to the combination of previously pending claims 2 and 6. Claim 20 calls for a device management system which connects a network device with a device management terminal that manages the network device so that they can communicate with each other. Among other elements, the claimed network device includes a function selecting section that allows a user to select one or more of the functions corresponding to the function provision module determined by the function determining section. Further, the module reading section reads out a function provision module that corresponds to a function selected by the function selecting section from the module storing section. Applicant submits that claim 20 is novel and non-obvious for at least the same reasons as set forth above regarding the other independent claims.

CONCLUSION

It is believed that all of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw all presently outstanding rejections. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action and the present application is in condition for allowance. Thus, prompt and favorable consideration of this amendment is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (248) 641-1600.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: May 14, 2008

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